

A

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE ENGLISH NATION.

Saturday, November 9. 1706.

I brought the last Discourse down to the Subject of the present Treaty, and I think, if I am ask'd, what the Treaty consists of, this is a short Abstract.—
'Tis a Capitulation of Coalition and Incorporation, on the Foundation of Equalities and Equivalents; and this is in its Nature a thing so just, that no Man can object.

If there be a Hardship on any side, and an Equivalent is offer'd, there can be no Injustice; I know very few things in the World, but what may be made up with Equivalents, such as Life, Virginity, Honour and Eternity; all Matters of Value between Man and Man are separable—
If therefore necessary Clashings happen in the present Interests of the two Kingdoms, and the Doctrine of Equalities cannot run thro' every Article, the Treaters without

Question hit upon the best Medium in the World, *Viz.* An Equivalent— To say an Equivalent cannot be given, is to talk Non-sence, and argue against Demonstration; Money is an Equivalent to all Kinds of Value; and discounting Advantages, all things in the World may be brought to a Part—Weight for Inches, says the Horseman; so Money for Discount, says the Merchant, Payment for Rebate, Value for Value, *pro Rata*, as the Merchant calls it, is always an Equivalent.

'Tis true, that these Equivalents respect principally, Trade, Taxes, and all Sorts of Payment, and in this Respect the Union has been very well consider'd; but that is not my present Purpose.

I am now upon examining the State of the Union, respecting the Church on either hand;

hand ; and as I cannot but think, there is an Equivalent in the Securities on either hand ; I am very sorry to see so many Gentlemen uneasy about the Affairs of the Church on either side—And I shall examine the Case more particularly, as to *Scotland* first, not only because it is first in the Treaty, but because the Objections there, have been a little unexpected.

I have always thought the Clamours at the Church of *Scotland*, and its Settlement, unreasonable and severe— When I have heard so much of the Violence of her Members, their hot Spirits, their Fury, and their Persecution; indeed, I thought, when I came among them, to find some Footsteps of such things, too plain to be hid— And that there could not have been all that Smoak, without some Fire.

But when I come to find, that there are Numbers of Episcopal Clergy, who in *Scotland*, by the Connivence and Tenderness of the *Presbyterian Kirk*, hold their Churches, tho' they remain Episcopal, and as to their Establishments Unorthodox, if that Word shall be allow'd me.

When I come to see, there are Episcopal Meetings or Conventicles in every Part of *Scotland*, and twice as many, as there are Churches in the City of *Edinburgh*, who receive no manner of Disturbance from the Kirk or the Government.

When I consider, that the Ministers in these Churches or Meeting-houses, neither take the Oaths, nor pray for the QUEEN, and some openly for King *James VIII.*

When I consider, that in several Parts of the Kingdom, where the cuted Episcopal Ministers have been poor and reduc'd, the *Presbyterians*, both Ministers and People, have contributed largely to their support.

When I saw these things, I could not but own the Kirk of *Scotland* to be the most abused People in the World, in the several Charges of Persecution and Violence upon the Dissenting Episcopal Clergy of *Scotland*.

Perhaps Violences, Tumults, and Rabble may have made Excursions on both sides, and invading Churches has been an Error, the Gentlemen, I presume, will not defend—But I am speaking in general, Nationally, or as a Kirk and an establish'd Power, I

confess, I have seen nothing of it there.

The Episcopal Men enjoy their Liberty, they preach openly, they are not impos'd upon, no not in the same things, in which the *Dissenters in England* are oblig'd ; but go on unmolested, without owning that Government, under which they enjoy the Liberty they have.

This is much more than the *Dissenters in England* enjoy, or than they seek. Well, Gentlemen, all this Clamour will cease and die, and all those of the Episcopal Part, who will conform to the Government, will be let alone as to their Religion, and may go on their Way.

But say the Patriots of the *Scots Kirk*, we are not secure of this ; you tell us of Advantages and Securities : We in *Scotland* are not easie under the Security of our Treaty, and till that is got over, how can we unite ?

I have anwer'd this at large, and thought, I had done with it ; but since those Tracts have not seen the World in so extended a manner as this may, I crave leave to repeat the Discourse, which I hope, shall not be unseasonable.

Before I enter upon this Subject, I think it proper, however, to premise, to prevent the Umbrage of any ; that I know no Article of the Union for the Church of *Scotland*, but what is particularly applicable to the Church of *England*, and the Security being mutual, I claim to be understood in a Sense suitable to both ; and if any Man takes me otherwife, he will do me wrong.

The Design of this Treaty is Union ; it could not be a Union in the receiv'd Notion of the Word, if there were not mutual Securities— All Manner of Union must depend upon Equalities, and mutual Security is the first that can be thought of ; if one side were safe, the other expos'd ; if one uppermost, the other deprel'd ; this would be Subjection, not Union— 'Tis a Balance must make a Union, or it can never merit that Name, and this Balance must consist of Equalities or Equivalents, and this is the meer Nature and Substance of the Union.

Now, if the Union cannot be made without Equalities, it cannot be, but both the respective National Establishments must be secur'd.

secur'd, otherwise where is the Equality? and this is what I crave leave to be a little particular about, as a thing which meets with mighty Objections abroad, and perhaps in time may come to be debated at home; and therefore cannot be unseasonable on any hand.

Our Church will be devour'd at home, say the High Gentlemen in England; the Scots Presbyterians will joyn the Phana-

ticks in England, and undo us.

Our Church will be overwhelm'd, say the Men of Fears and Jealousies in Scotland; we shall be oppres'd with Numbers, out-voted, reduc'd, and over-run by the Church of England, by Prelacy and a Party. — To both these, I hope, the following will be some effectual Answer, and I refer to the Particulars —

MISCELLANEA.

Having been long treating of the Union of Scotland, I cannot but put my Countrymen in Mind of a serious Jeit, passed upon them lately in Scotland; the Use I shall make of it, will by no means interrupt the Union, but rather contribute to its Furtherance and Encouragement, I hope; or if it does not, England and Scotland too must make a very ill Use of my very good Design.

There is a Book lately publish'd, tho' printed in England, said to be written by one Mr. Hodges, the same, who had the Reward of four hundred Pounds or thereabout, awarded by the Parliament of Scotland, for writing a Book in Defence of Scotland.

Amongst a great many wonderful Reasons, this Gentleman gives, why Scotland should not unite with England; One of them is, and I assure you, Gentlemen, if it be true, 'tis one of the best Reasons can be given; That England is so wicked, so immoral, so corrupted a Nation, that they are not fit to be united with; and the Scots will bring themselves in to answer for England's National Sins, that this is the direct Way to be ruin'd, and the like. — But to be more particular, I'll give you the Author's own Words —

P. 47. He is giving an Account of the excellent Discipline of the Church of Scotland, and how an Error was no sooner start-ed by any body, but it receiv'd immediate Check — And I cannot deny, but he may reproach us in some things, as he does, with

the Connivence in England at Deism, Socianism, Cowsrd's Second Thoughts, Af-gils flying to Heaven, &c. — Immortalitiy, and the like Errors, not taken Cognizance of by the Church of England; and in Prosecution of this, he says,

" That no Ecclesiastick Constitution of any Nation upon Earth hath Error in Principle and Sin in Practice, and Satan's Kingdom in general, under such powerful and awful Checks, as that of the Kirk of Scotland: Where Sin and Error no sooner appears, than it falls under the Observation and Censure,

" First, of the Kirk-Sessions meeting every Week in every Parish, consisting of the Pastor, Deacons, for the Care of the Poor, and Elders for observing the Opinions and Manners of the People.

" Where, if Satisfaction is not given, by a Penitent Acknowledgment of the Offence committed, it is from thence carried to the Censure of the Presbytery, being a Collection of Ministers meeting every Month.

" And if Satisfaction is not there given, the Fault in Practice committed, or Error in Principle vented, is thence carried to the Synod consisting of several Presbyteries, and meeting every Quarter.

" Where if due Acknowledgment is not made, it is at last by them carried to the general Assembly, meeting every Year, where the Offence is sure to meet with a final and effectual Restraint.

" That

" That the Effect of this excellent Constitution and Discipline is such, by the Blessing of God, that in no Nation upon Earth, is to be found so great an Uniformity in Religion, and such of Freedom from owned Errors, as in Scotland.

" So that except what Remains there are of Popery, Prelacy, and some few Quakers; the whole Kingdom is unanimous in Religion, as to Point of Profession.

" While the Want of such Discipline makes so many gross Opinions abound in England, as to verifie what Puffendorf says, Ch. 4. of his Introduction; There is not any Nation under the Sun, where more different and more absurd Opinions are to be met with in Religion, than in England.

" Yet it must still be acknowledg'd, and ought to be with great Regret; that by the Subtilty of Satan, and Power of natural Corruption, Godlessness of Heart, and Prophanity of Practice, is still the Choice of too many in Scotland, and chiefly supported and promoted by vicious Infections, contracted and brought from abroad; and that even amongst the Good, their Charity and Zeal are too much decay'd and cool'd, in Respect of what formerly they have been.

" And yet again, it must be justly acknowledged; That Sin in Scotland is but shame-ac'd, timorous and lurking, in Comparison of what it is in England, and especially at London.

Now, really tho' this Man's starting, this is a Sort of a Religious Jeft, and the Use he makes of it ridiculous; yet in our next Paper it may be very useful, Gentlemen, to show you the Character, the English Nation has abroad for the unpunish'd Crimes of the Age.

Nor may it be without its Use to reflect, what Use other Nations make of our Vices, and consequently what Occasion there is to pursue the Work of Reformation in England; since our Sins are thrown back upon us by Way of Retort in this Case, as making us a People unfit to unite with.

I shall in the next give you England's black Charakter, as recited by this Author, and as represented to Scotland to encrease National Averions; I hope, so much of it as you find true, you will endeavour to reform; and for the rest, let the Slanderer alone to receive his due Return from your humble Servant.

THE REVIEW.

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